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ABSTRACT

Noting that the preceding two decades have seen a dramatic growth in the proportion of families that are headed by women, this book explores the causes and implications of this development. The book bring together information on the past and present prevalence of mother-headed families in different countries. It then considers the various explanations (economic, demographic, cultural, sociopsychological) that have been offered for the recent increase, examining whether these proposals fit the facts and what they imply in terms of the increase, decrease, or stabilization of the proportion of single-mother families. The chapters are: (1) "Is Easy Divorce to Blame?"; (2) "The Contribution of Out-of-Wedlock Births to the Incidence of Mother-Headed Families"; (3) "Why Out-of-Wedlock Births Increase"; (4) "Ex-Nuptiality in Non-European Countries"; (5) "Widows"; (6) "Biosocial and Demographic Theories of Parenting"; (7) "Feminist and Decomplementary Theories of Parenting"; and (8) "Final Conclusions." Over 250 references are included. (HTH)

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